

## "Heart of a student": integrative therapy community in the university context

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## RESEARCH

**“Coração de estudante”: a terapia comunitária integrativa no contexto universitário****"Heart of a student": integrative therapy community in the university context****"Corazón del estudiante": integrador de terapia de la comunidad universitaria en contexto**

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** To understand the repercussions of Community Therapy Integrative (ICT) among nursing students UFCG - Campus Cuité. **Method:** It is a qualitative research, with exploratory typology, and descriptive. **Results:** Were presented and discussed in an analytical category: (Re) Discovering ways: shares in Community Therapy Integrative wheels. Finally, ICT is an effective practice of care that values the promotion of health, promotes linkages and impacts the quality of life of the participants. **Conclusion:** It is hoped that the study contributes to the understanding to knowledge about the integrative practices of ICT in particular, so as to encourage spaces for sharing and of integrated care and humane. **Descriptors:** Nursing, Therapy, Students.

### RESUMO

**Objetivo:** Conhecer as repercussões da Terapia Comunitária Integrativa (TCI) entre os estudantes de enfermagem da UFCG - Campus Cuité. **Método:** Pesquisa de cunho qualitativo, com tipologia exploratória descritiva. **Resultados:** Foram apresentados e discutidos em uma categoria analítica: (Re)Descobrimos caminhos: as participações nas rodas de terapia comunitária integrativa. Por fim, observou-se que a terapia se faz como prática efetiva de cuidado que valoriza a promoção da saúde, promove vínculos e tem repercussões positivas na vida dos participantes. **Conclusão:** Espera-se que o estudo contribua para ampliar o conhecimento acerca das práticas integrativas, da TCI em especial, de modo a incentivar espaços de partilha, de cuidado integral e humanizado. **Descritores:** Enfermagem, Terapia, Estudantes.

### RESUMEN

**Objetivo:** Evaluar el impacto de la Terapia Integrativa de la Comunidad (TIC) en estudiantes de enfermería UFCG - Campus Cuité. **Método:** Estudio cualitativo con una tipología exploratoria y descriptiva. **Resultados:** Fueron presentados y discutidos en una categoría analítica: (Re) Descubrir maneras: la terapia comunitaria integradora ruedas de acciones. Por último, se observó que la terapia es una práctica tan eficaz de la atención que valora la promoción de la salud, promueve relaciones y las repercusiones de la calidad de vida de los participantes. **Conclusión:** Se espera que el estudio ayude a mejorar nuestra comprensión de las prácticas inclusivas, la TCI, en particular, a fin de fomentar espacios de intercambio y de atención integral y humanizada. **Descriptores:** Enfermería, Terapia, Estudiantes.

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## INTRODUCTION

Integrative Community Therapy (ICT) consists of a space where there is sharing of experiences and wisdom that they experienced on a day-to-day basis, so circular and horizontal. It is characterized by an environment of talk and listen, where each one becomes a therapist himself, through the search for solutions of problems exposed in the speech of the other.<sup>1-2</sup>

The ICT is a tool that allows us to build supportive social networks to promote life and the prevention of illness, thus providing a practical therapeutic effect that appreciates the culture and folk knowledge, besides rescuing the individual and collective skills.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to know that the ICT consists of a recent practice in health services, but that has been consolidating as a therapeutic resource effective mainly as a device in community mental health.

Different population groups can be benefited with this practice. So the wheels of communitarian therapy can be developed in diverse environments, such as schools, basic health units, hospitals, churches, universities, and others.

When speaking in ICT while an action for mental health, it is necessary to consider the individual inserted in its social context. Thereby the ICT is inserted in the basic attention to health, for example, as a practical complement and not substitute, in order to provide listening, welcoming, sharing solutions to the everyday suffering, that threatens the physical and mental integrity of the subject who suffers. We need to consider that the individual is inserted into a network in a community with valuable cultural resources and that, through these resources, seeking solutions to the suffering and not the disease.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, the locations of the ICT should be increasingly close to its participants to ensure ease in access to the wheels, as shown in the study where it was found that the therapy is carried out in various contexts and with different groups of the population: children, adolescents, women, the elderly, persons with mental disorders and their families, besides professionals of family health teams. Concluding that the therapy is an important working tool for dealing with groups, originating from different contexts and that this is driving the consolidation of community attention model advocated by SUS.<sup>4</sup>

The ICT educational spaces is present with successful experiences among therapists and students. In the study, it was evidenced that the wheels of ICT has demonstrated effectiveness when speaking in health promotion and in the formation of networks of solidarity among students. In addition to performing as a practice of support and protection to the college student in appreciation of life and of their potential.<sup>2</sup>

In this context the student academic community is a public susceptible to the occurrence of stress, anxiety, insecurity, among other problems. In a survey, 48% reported having experienced emotional crisis in the last 12 months. A fact which directly influences

the income it generates learning difficulties and ineffective study habits. Emotional difficulties affecting academic performance in different proportions: anxiety 70%, insomnia 44%, feeling of inattention/mental confusion 31%, excessive shyness 25%, depression 22%, fear/panic 14%<sup>5</sup>

The period of study at the University is in general a transition phase for most young people, where many changes occur at this point. Many young people leave their cities, 43% of students reported having difficulties in adapting to new situations involving those related to city, to housing or separation from family, which causes the emergence of emotional suffering mentioned above.<sup>5</sup>

Thus, the University environment becomes a place conducive to realization of the ICT to alleviate or minimize this suffering experienced in the academic period, so that interventions for the promotion of health of these students will help not only in College, but in their personal and professional lives.

Despite the scientific production on ICT, have had a considerable increase in the past, few are still careful strategies geared to the promotion of health and prevention of mental distress among college students.

In this sense, the objective of knowing what the repercussions of ICT among the nursing students of the UFCG, campus Cuité.

Worth noting, that this study, was the result of an extension project titled “Heart of Student: the communitarian therapy promoting health and building links between university students” developed by faculty and students of the course of Bachelor of Nursing at the Universidade federal de Campina Grande/Cuité-PB

## METHOD

This is a survey of qualitative nature, with exploratory and descriptive typology.

The scenario of the survey stood at UFCG, campus Cuité, which is in the locality of the Olho D' Água da Bica to 2 km from the Centre of the municipality of Cuité-PB and about 230 km from the capital, João Pessoa.

Cuité is a municipality in the region of Brazil Brazil and was contemplado with an expansion campus of the Federal University of Campina Grande. This municipality is located near the border of the State of Rio Grande do Norte. The city of Cuité has an average distance of 225km of the paraibana capital, João Pessoa. These data bring to the campus of Cuité a differential in the that corresponds to the profile of the academics, in which the vast majority comes from the interior of the State of Paraíba and of the interior of the State of Rio Grande do Norte.



In this context, students integrate the student body that referred to center has lower socio-economic conditions that the students enrolled in the main campuses, in Campina Grande UFCG, or even of those who live in João Pessoa.

Cuité campus UFCG is divided into two academic units: health and education. The courses are part of the academic unit of health-UAS are the Bachelor in nursing, pharmacy and nutrition. Already in the academic unit of education is composed of undergraduate biology, chemistry, mathematics and physics. The course of Bachelor of Nursing was created in the year 2007, with a duration of 5 years, corresponding to 10 half-yearly periods.

The study was conducted with 10 academicians of the course of Bachelor of nursing, who participated in the meetings of TCI developed in the period from May to December 2012, on the basis of the extension projects entitled: "Heart of student: the communitarian therapy promoting health and building links between the University" and "The Community Therapy as enabler of improved quality of life for inmates of the municipality of Cuité-PB".

As criteria for inclusion of the survey, students were established over 18 years who were enrolled in the course of Bachelor of nursing UFCG - Campus Cuité, who participated in more than one wheel of ICT extension projects, and who agreed to cooperate with the study.

The sample collection was conducted through a semi-structured interview questions prepared by the researchers. We used a voice recorder, where the statements were recorded by the permission of the respondents, in order to maintain the confidentiality and anonymity of the same, for it also pseudonyms were created as: Friendship, Wisdom, Confidence, Peace, Joy, Happiness, Solidarity, Hope, Love and Simplicity. The choice of these pseudonyms gave up because they are words of good feelings, which are built on wheels or consolidated ICT. Since this is a survey that was conducted with humans, the ethical principles were respected, established by Resolution n° 466/2012. The research process was initiated after approval of the study protocol by the Ethics in Research Committee - the Federal University of Campina Grande ZIP code in the document CAAE - 15298213.0.0000.5182.<sup>6</sup>

The material was discussed based on content analysis technique of Bardin, where it was possible to create an analytical category "(Re) Discovering paths: the stakes in the wheels of ICT, emerging as a subcategory" Untying knots and bonding "<sup>7</sup>

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Characterization of the participants of the study

The age profile of the participants were between 21 to 35 years of age. The national surveys that reveal the socio-economic and cultural profile of University students, which showed that a large part of this population is made up of young people with ages of up to 24 years of age. The criteria that are based on the national and international literature as

traditional academic classification those aged up to 21 years. A second track covers students between 22 and 25 years of age and finally, are those over 26 years, considered as mature students.<sup>8</sup>

With regard to the sex of respondents 60% female and 40% male. The female is more prevalent in federal universities, proven fact in this study and in several national surveys. The example we have a survey that showed 7% more of women compared to men, justified by the constant decrease aspect of the male population in universities, for different reasons.<sup>5</sup>

When cross-examined about where respondents obtained knowledge of the practice of ICT all reported that it was in the University environment, differing only the manner in which they met, some through discipline elective of complementary therapies in health, curricular component in the course of Bachelor of Nursing-Campus Cuité, others through extension projects developed at the Academy who have adopted the communitarian therapy as a main theme.

ICT wheels were developed on UFCG with people and in different locations, allowing the constant participation of some sporadic and others. This made every new wheel, new stories were shared and new links are formed. Participation in the first wheel of ICT in General occurs for practical knowledge, there were people who were just a wheel, but they are remembered to this day by those who were present by the fact that your problem have been chosen, as well as other participated in a large number of wheels, but never exposed their problems.

When respondents were asked about the number of wheels of ICT who participated, the average was 7 wheels, being 10% of respondents participated in 5 wheels, 60% participated in 6 wheels, 10% were present in 8 wheels, 10% went to 9 wheels, 10% in 15 (fifteen) wheels.

To enable the knowledge about the impact of wheels of ICT in the lives of academics, it was necessary to analyze the empirical material, composed of interviews and based on the objectives of the study, which resulted in the construction of an analytical category.

#### **(Re) Finding paths: the shares in ICT wheels**

The participation in the wheels of ICT is justified for several reasons which can be summarized by the opportunity to share and listen to, besides welcoming the participants. The College student is inserted in an environment of uncertainty, stressful, often lonely; It takes a lot out of himself, which ends up generating feelings and conflicts that are difficult to be resolved if they don't get the support, a friendly Word or a cosy ambience.

To the question what are the reasons that led college students to participate in the wheels of ICT, we found several answers, but similar when it comes to participation in the first wheel of therapy, which in General is watered a lot of curiosity as shown in the report:

*First by curiosity, as I didn't know and didn't know how to get along, how to do the wheels [...] And then from the first wheel [...] I'm interested to ...(Trust)*

Curiosity means "desire to see, learn, learn, meet". As curiosity is good because that shows curious discovers a new world.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to curiosity, it was observed that the horizontal way how the wheels of ICT develops, encourages and promotes the participation of the subjects, as shown in the report:

*[...] as you say in therapy, you're not there to give advice, for you're judging anyone ... it's a way so you are of equal to equal, so I liked [...] no one's more superior than you inside the wheels. (Trust)*

This shows that the ICT also is characterized by the sharing of egalitarian and circular form, where each one becomes a therapist himself, from the life stories that are reported on the wheels. And is still an inclusive space, where everyone has the ability to help, to teach and to learn, generating a feeling of equality that stimulates the participation.<sup>1,10</sup>

In ICT communication makes it possible to share the experiences of coping that each participant used to solve their problems. The wheels are usually watered a lot of emotion and reflection, is notorious differences in expressions during their development. The story of hope explains about the help through the experiences of others as a way of identifying your own history:

*The wheels of communitarian therapy we have a time to interact and share experiences, learn a little about the other. So I found this very important... be meeting Mr, be interacting with others and can also help each other from a story. (Hope)*

In addition to promoting greater interaction with the group, promote the building of ties, provide an identification on life stories. ICT, through these features, helps relieve the anxieties of daily life and does emerge the feeling of solidarity with each other, as noted in the speech:

*The reason that led me to participate in these wheels was to diminish the anguish, the negative thoughts and show solidarity with the other fellows ... (Simplicity).*

The sentiments, if not expressed, tend to affect the physical and mental well-being of people. Is part of the three basic features of ICT group discussion and the establishment of a mental health work. Thereby the prevention and mental health promotion from the therapeutic community practice - ICT - is a the bet of the new model of psychosocial care as it is characterized with a new strategy of completeness. Thus obtaining important results, expressed in changes of interactive patterns and interpersonal relations more sincere, opening a possibility to accept and interact with the difference among the members of society. The effects of the ICT are not yet fully known.<sup>1-2,4</sup>

To ask what are the problems more reported on wheels that study participants attended we realized that most of them are linked to family, either by nostalgia, health or disease. In addition, it was asked what the contribution of ICT in academic life and how they felt to participate the wheels of ICT. In this way, was built this subcategory:

#### a) "Untying knots and bonding"

The topics related to family, homesickness and friends, health problems, relationship problems, anxiety and anguish related to the professional career and academic activities overload were the prevalent in ICT encounters with college students.

Reports of solidarity and Simplicity show that the distance from family and homesickness are problems faced by a large number of college students who need to change from town to make a higher level course.

*Most problems reported was the issue of distance from home, longing, family problems that by the distance was more complicated to deal with it, because it was not present in the daily life with his family. (Solidarity)*

*The problems reported during the wheels of therapies are related to the distance from the pupil [...] of his home, away from their families, the anguish that they coexist during the coexistence with different people, with other mentalities, the longing... (Simplicity)*

The family of all social institutions is more important. We can affirm that the experiences which the child has as a member of the family, is the most powerful influence on the kind of adult that will be in the future. Thus, the society is greatly affected by the family, both directly, as indirectly, both in present and in the future. The greatest expectation is that she will care, protection, learning of the affections, construction of identities and relational links able to promote better quality of life to its members and its effective social inclusion in the community, in case the University, and the society in which they live.<sup>11</sup>

Beyond the nostalgia of family issues related to the academic environment were discussed, as reported:

Overload of the University activities. (Harmony)

... anguish by TCC, uncertainty of the course and when you finish the course. (Wisdom)

... anguish [...] during the course, the difficulties encountered in the course, the difficulties for entry into the profession later on the desktop. (Simplicity)

These reports show the weight of the choice of profession on student life. The overload of activities is justified by the fact that the University be a production environment, which requires knowledge of the academic effort, dedication and focus. The daily life of a college student is permeated by evidence, seminars, lectures, practical and theoretical classes, extension, research projects, among other activities. All this requires focus and determination to follow and complete the course.

When it comes to the anxieties and aspirations of the students know that they are generated by this phase of life being a special stage, where young people are preparing for adulthood and take on responsibilities beyond winning a place in the market. Young people are forced to make choices that result in your future and those choices often are directed by parents who induce children to rise in society.<sup>2</sup>



ICT, as an example of group therapy, offers a space for these students to talk about their insecurities, exposing the difficulties you can better understand what he achieves. The ICT group's work stands out because it is a space for sharing and reflection of the individuals in the search for solution of its dilemmas.<sup>1</sup>

With all the themes reported and shared in the wheels of ICT stated above, we asked respondents how they felt by participating on these wheels. In General, responded that they felt well, relieve their suffering, form links, feel at community, among others.

To facilitate the integration of persons with the group, is held at the beginning of each wheel of ICT, the host moment. It is at this time that songs can be sung by participants, and then the co-terapeuta receives the group, welcomes, asks if there are birthdays that week/month, sing happy birthday and follow the remaining steps in the therapy. Thus, the host makes the participant feel free, comfortable and relaxed, as demonstrated in the following account:

*I felt welcomed, I felt very well... (Hope)*

We observe in the account above that ICT stimulates participants to find mechanisms for resolution of personal problems through talks about another, showing us the power of resilience of the participants. Resilience is the ability of individuals, families and communities to overcome their difficulties, learning from their own life experiences, being instrumental in communitarian therapy, because the crises, sufferings, victories and achievements of each, offered at the meeting are exploited as a progressive process of social consciousness.<sup>12</sup>

Aspects of relief of suffering are perceived through the lines of the following collaborators:

*I felt very well, because it relieves the tension a little you [...] you can share your academic life with other students too, just that knowledge sharing with people. (Happiness)*

*When I attended the first felt well [...] even if it's not you the chosen for is exposing your problem, but you come out kind of relieved [...] you see that your problem is smaller than the other's passing. (Trust)*

The suffering is a condition experienced by every person and which serves as a tool for auto approach, leading them to self-knowledge, since the higher the knowledge that we have of ourselves better acceptance and growth of our cultural identity.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, the students have addressed during the interview the importance of mutual support and social network, as an advisory tool for the confrontation of their problems, as demonstrated by the following report:

*...therapy shows us that we are inserted in a community and people have to realize that, that we are not alone, we are living with other people, that's going to strengthen us society to confront each problem that arise on a day-to-day basis. (Solidarity)*

Therefore, we can say that the ICT promotes a social support network, that encourage the development of a Web of social relationship that promotes the exchange of

experiences and the overcoming of adversity, through support for emotional and social achievement of individual and collective strength.<sup>1-2,13</sup>

With all these feelings described above, it appears that some of the goals have been achieved, since the ICT students had the opportunity to share and listen to the dilemmas of everyday life and academic, and yet, through sharing was possible for overcoming some problems.

In this way, to ask college students what are the contributions of ICT wheels in his academic life, the answers were quite varied. It is possible to say that the ICT is a humanizing strategy, to stimulate the interrelationship and self-knowledge, as reported below:

*Contributed to my humanization, commiserating with the people, with the troubles of others. And seeing that we all have problems, that the US is small compared to that of many other people who are there in these wheels. (Simplicity)*

*Contributed mostly to cope better with [...] with groups and with people, be able to get more listening to the next, their problems, because he acts like that, about it. Because sometimes we look, mainly just for his own "navel" and do not see the problem that that person passes [...] made me somewhat more human. (Wisdom)*

Humanization of care strategies prioritize the enhancement of health production process, in case those future health professionals, through the establishment of ties of solidarity and the creation of democratic spaces, focusing on participation and appreciation of everyone involved in group processes, are attitudes that add value to the human. Values those who are exalted the wheels of communitarian therapy.<sup>14</sup>

Regarding the health work, humanized and integral practice in health includes the unique aspects of the individual, the family and the community, through sharing of knowledge, professional-user relationship. The attention and the professional look should take into account the biological, psychological and social dimensions, the individual as part of a whole, as we noticed in the following account:

*I think the main contributing is you interact with each other, the same bond formation, to see the problems [...] As a healthcare professional I think [...] you should [...] seek to learn a little about the patient, or professional colleague who you are working with, view it as a whole. (Hope)*

It is observed that the ICT promotes to the end the completeness, the search in go beyond illness and suffering exposed, in order to grasp the broader needs of the subject. From the moment that the University Health incorporates in his life, personal or professional, the humanization and completeness arises the possibility of do health through participatory, Dialogic form and considering practices and local knowledge.<sup>15</sup>

## CONCLUSION

It can be observed that the ICT has been increasingly consolidated as a health practice that promotes the strengthening of relationships and social support networks among participants, in our case college students and therapists. ICT is meeting the goals to which it proposes and that should be disclosed as a practice of therapeutic transforming character of reality, and can be used in the various levels of health care.

One of the proposals from the ICT is enter participants in the community in which they live, as noted in the accounts, in which college students see the participation on wheels as a space for relief of suffering, where their troubles are shared and the freedom of expression is favored. The exchange of experience takes place by the appreciation of listening and appreciation of the life of each participant.

It was observed that college students have various problems, common in this stage of life, where changes and adaptations are required. The University entrance for many brings emotional fragility, which are already far from the bosom like the participants of this study, that they had to leave their families to study in another city, raised so feelings of helplessness, insecurity, anxiety, longing, concerns about his own health and family. Along with the fear of loss of relatives or friends, whether related to death or distance.

The way ICT is developed, based on the horizontality of care encourages the host, empowerment of participants and humanized attention. The importance of having a space like this is essential because it occurs the valorization of the individual and their culture, renewal of self-esteem and self-confidence, generating personal and interpersonal impacts in the society in which they live.

Finally, ICT is a safe and effective practice that values health promotion, disease prevention and quality of life of participants. This study is expected to contribute to the knowledge about community practices of ICT in particular, so as to encourage sharing and production spaces of integral care and humanized.

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